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THE COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THE CHAPLAIN

BY

CHAPLAIN (COLONEL) DON C. BRELAND

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THE COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF THE CHAPLAIN

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
23 March 1987

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Don C. Breland, CH (COL)

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Regulations clearly state that the responsibility for the religious program in a military unit rests upon the commander. In their desire to exercise this responsibility well, they have often formed definite views and perspectives on how the religious program should be conducted. It would be extremely helpful to a chaplain to know what these views are. This study attempts to provide a medium for those views to be heard. In addition, the statement of these commanders' perspectives provides an opportunity to measure the relevance of published chaplain doctrine. Through a questionnaire given to the students and faculty members of the US Army War College who had been battalion commanders, a consolidated indication of the commanders' ideas is formed. A brief digest of chaplain doctrine for battalion-level operations is presented. A final chapter compares and contrasts the two and draws out implications for both chaplains and commanders.

PREFACE

The current direction of the Chaplaincy is toward developing a Unit Ministry Team, comprised of at least one chaplain and one chaplain assistant. This team concept is designed to enable its members to offer the best possible ministry to the soldier. I fully endorse the UMT and believe that it is the right direction for the chaplaincy.

Why then, does this study focus on only one member of the UMT--the chaplain? The UMT is fairly new doctrine. My conversations with commanders prior to this study convinced me that they are not yet fully aware of what it is and does. Therefore, rather than confuse the issue, it seemed far better to ask them about something with which they have had extensive experience. It is my hope that in the very near future some chaplain attending the War College will run a survey and find the same high level of knowledge of the UMT that this one found of the chaplain.

The concentration of 211 former battalion commanders at the US Army War College has proved to be a rich resource for a variety of research endeavors. Their experiences and the lessons they learned as a part of those experiences have the potential to greatly assist all of us. This is certainly true for the chaplaincy. So, to that select group of my colleagues who have no doubt been "surveyed out" I extend my heartfelt thanks. Your comments will help us in the chaplaincy to do our jobs better.

My thanks goes also to my faculty advisor, CH (COL) Tim Tatum. His words of encouragement and insightful guidance were of untold help in completing the project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
PREFACE	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I. A DIGEST OF CHAPLAIN DOCTRINE	
The Chaplain as Staff Officer	3
The Chaplain as Clergyperson	5
The Chaplain in Field Training	6
The Chaplain in Combat	7
The Chaplain and the Technical Chain	9
Commander's Responsibilities	10
Conclusion	11
CHAPTER II. QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS	13
Questionnaire Description	13
The Chaplain as Staff Officer	16
The Chaplain as Clergyperson	19
The Chaplain in Field Training	21
The Chaplain in Combat	22
The Chaplain and the Technical Chain	25
Commander's Responsibilities	27
Conclusion	30
CHAPTER III. A COMPARISON OF CHAPLAIN DOCTRINE WITH COMMANDERS' VIEWS	
The Chaplain as Staff Officer	31
The Chaplain as Clergyperson	32
The Chaplain in Field Training	33
The Chaplain in Combat	34
The Chaplain and the Technical Chain	35
Commander's Responsibilities	35
Conclusion	36
BIBLIOGRAPHY	38
ANNEX I. THE QUESTIONNAIRE	40

INTRODUCTION

As the door closes quietly behind him, Chaplain (1LT) John Goode looks worried. He has just completed his first meeting with his battalion commander. The commander had seemed genuinely pleased to have a chaplain assigned to his staff. But he mentioned several things which concerned Chaplain Goode.

"How'd the meeting with the CO go?" asked the Executive Officer, Major Sam Lassiter. "I think I'm going to need some help, Sir" Chaplain Goode replied. "Was it that bad?" the XO asked jokingly. "No, it was a pleasant meeting. He seemed happy to have me here" replied Chaplain Goode. "Then, what's the problem?" asked Major Lassiter.

"He seems to have very high expectations for what a chaplain can do in a battalion", reflected Chaplain Goode. "He talked about my being a full member of the battalion staff and about all of the impact I could have on the morale and quality of life of the soldiers. Sir, I've only been in the Army three months. I've had the chaplain basic course and a few days orientation by the chaplain training manager and the brigade chaplain. That's the total of my preparation. I want to do all the commander wants, and even more. But right now I don't know what he expects, and I don't know if I have the training necessary to get it all done."

The preceding scenario is applicable in varying degrees to most chaplains in their initial tours of duty. Many chaplains come on active duty directly from a civilian ministry or upon completion of their seminary training. After nine weeks in the chaplain basic course, they are sent to their first duty assignment. There they are plunged directly into all of the demands and expectations of the military community. They are neophytes to the Army system. But they are often not viewed as neophytes. Because they are clergy (with all of the mystique which sometimes surrounds the clergy) it is assumed that they can do all of the things which clergy are supposed to do. In reality, the chaplain is adjusting to a whole new environment of ministry. His or her learning curve is extremely steep in these early days.

Two things are very important to the chaplain at this point: (1) a solid grasp of that portion of chaplain doctrine which is applicable to his or her level of functioning and, (2) an understanding that the religious program of a unit is the responsibility of the commander. The expectations of the commander regarding the religious program therefore become foundational in the shaping of the chaplain's ministry in that setting.

This study will attempt to describe the essential elements in both of these important areas. In addition, the opportunity to compare chaplain doctrine with commanders' views is presented by this layout.

Chapter I will present a digest of chaplain doctrine as it applies to the battalion assignment. Chapter II will summarize commanders' views. Chapter III will compare the two.

CHAPTER I

DIGEST OF CHAPLAIN DOCTRINE (Battalion-level operations)

General

This chapter will lay out the doctrine which guides chaplain operations at the battalion level. Accordingly, the attempt will be made to distill out of the total doctrine that which applies directly to the battalion-level chaplain. The scope is narrowed even further to address only those areas raised in the questionnaire described in Chapter II.

It should be understood that "doctrine" is a generic term which includes published regulations, field manuals, and other sources. Emerging doctrine may also be included, but must be identified as such. In this study, those references identified as Field Circulars constitute the emerging doctrine included. The primary regulation which governs chaplain operations is AR 165-20. The primary application for guidance regarding this regulation is found in FM 16-5 (which is scheduled to become the basis of a series of field manuals).

Chaplain as Officer

Army chaplains have a dual role. They are both a staff officer and a religious leader. In their staff capacity they are expected to advise the commander and perform other duties which

support the religious program. AR 165-20 states:

Army chaplains have dual roles as religious leaders. Their duties are prescribed by law under section 3547, title 10, United States Code. . . , and regulations and are modified by their religious requirements, the mission, and distinctive conditions of the Army. In the performance of their duties, chaplains have authority to exercise operational supervision and control....

It is recommended that the chaplain be placed on the personal staff of the commander and be given direct access to the commander... The chaplain also serves on the special staff of the commander. [1]

The regulation then moves to specify the functions of the staff officer dimension of the chaplain's role. The portion of the regulation given here has been edited. Those functions which do not apply primarily to the battalion level have been omitted.

a. Chaplains perform the duties of personal and special staff officers. They provide information for the commander, make continuing studies for planning, and submit recommendations to the commander on their own initiative or in response to directives.

b. Chaplains perform the following duties as they apply to the mission of the command:

(1) Advise the commander and staff on matters of religion, morals, and morale as affected by religion.

(2) Plan and conduct chaplain section combat training and ministrations.

(3) Advise the commander on the assignment of Chaplain Assistants (CA) within the command.

(4) Inform the commander and staff of the religious needs of all assigned personnel and provide or plan for these needs.

(5) Coordinate religious services or observances as approved by the commander.

(6) Supervise all religious ministries and the use of facilities as approved by the commander.

(7) Advise the commander and staff in planning and programming related to the moral and ethical quality of leadership, the care of people, religion, chaplain and CA personnel matters, and related funding data within the command.

(The remaining sub-paragraphs--8 through 24--of this section deal with specific items such as chapel use and maintenance, ecclesiastical supplies, the integration of chaplain activities into the overall program of the command, advising the commander on

unfamiliar religious groups, the preparation of evaluations and reports, and the utilization of non-appropriated chaplain funds.) [2]

FM 16-5 consolidates the various elements mentioned in AR 165-20 into more global language. It deals only with the broad intent of the chaplain's staff officer functions. It says:

The basic responsibility for the religious program belongs to the commander. The commander is responsible for the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical well-being of all military personnel in the command. The chaplain is the commander's staff officer, advisor, and consultant on matters pertaining to religious life, morals and morale as affected by religion. [3]

(As a special staff officer) The chaplain provides the professional skills and staff support the commander needs in the assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the religious program. Chaplains obtain from the commander the resources necessary to implement religious support plans. [4]

At the same time, the chaplain has additional responsibilities as a personal staff officer. In this capacity the chaplain has a unique and often confidential relationship with the commander. In addition to serving as personal consultant and providing pastoral care to the commander, the chaplain serves as an informal communication link between the commander and the lowest ranking soldier. [5]

The Chaplain as Clergyperson

The second basic dimension of the chaplain's role is that of clergyperson. Within this group of activities are all of the specifically religious things which a chaplain does. AR 165-20 addresses these under the heading, "Religious Duties."

...The chaplain provides for the religious ministry, pastoral care, and the moral well-being of the military community. All chaplains provide unit, area, and denominational coverage. They provide for the nurture and practice of religious beliefs, tradition, and customs to strengthen the spiritual lives of soldier and their families. They assist the command in the development and implementation of

religious programs and activities and provide professional advice and counsel on religious, moral, and ethical issues. Chaplains shall carry out a comprehensive program of religious activities for soldiers and their family members. They will provide encouragement and assistance to personnel of all faiths in building a community in which all religious beliefs are respected. [6]

These religious duties are carried out in three broad categories. They are religious services, religious education, and pastoral care. FM 16-5 approaches it in the following way:

The chaplain is a religious leader who contributes to the total well-being of the soldier by providing religious support. This religious support enables soldiers to participate in those activities essential to the exercise of their religious faith. The chaplain serves as a personal counselor and as a leader in religious rites and worship. The chaplain also provides pastoral care and humanitarian services which maintain and strengthen the soldier's religious faith and moral character. [7]

The Chaplain in Field Training

Chaplain doctrine is vague on field training for the chaplain. Responsibilities are assigned for conducting the training, but the nature and content of the training are addressed only in broad categories. Only in the training and evaluation outlines for ARTEP's contained in the Personnel Service Support Common Module is there specificity. However, this specificity focuses on the evaluation of training, rather than on the training itself.

Two Army Regulations (165-20 and 351-27) clearly assign the responsibility for chaplain field training. They establish that the senior chaplain (usually the Installation Chaplain) will conduct, support, monitor, and evaluate chaplain training in the

field. By implication, the unit commander is also responsible for the training of the chaplain and the chaplain assistant.

Field Circular 16-5-4, The Unit Ministry Team - General (Installation)(hereafter called FC 16-5-4) instructs the UMT to participate in the unit training conducted by the commander. It states: "Chaplains and chaplain assistants will participate in training programs conducted by their units to sustain and enhance soldier skills." The only place a priority for chaplain field training is established is in FC 16-5-4. Here it is stated that the first priority is training; the second priority is ministry:

Unit Field Training. Unit field training is essential. Chaplains attend field training exercises first to train to Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) standards, then to minister. ARTEP standards require UMTs to (a) provide, coordinate, and execute the command religious support program, (b) conduct religious rites and services, (c) provide pastoral care, (d) advise the commander on the morale, moral climate, and religious welfare of the command, and (e) advise the commander on ethical issues... UMTs also train in survival skills. They train in cover and concealment strategies, convoying, communications, maintaining field hygiene, map reading, and other related soldier skills. They strive always toward the highest military professionalism. [8]

The Chaplain in Combat

Doctrine for the operations of chaplains and chaplain assistants in the environment of combat is called "Forward Thrust." This concept requires that religious support be pushed forward to the smallest, most advanced elements of the battlefield. Through the assignment of chaplains to the battalion level and the religious coverage plans of brigade and higher units, front-line units are assured of the presence of a UMT. [9]

Prior to the actual engagement of the unit in combat, the

mission of the chaplain covers the full range of normal responsibilities. As described elsewhere these duties fall into the three broad categories of religious rites, pastoral care, and religious education. With the beginning of combat, however, doctrine clearly places the emphasis on one dimension of pastoral care-- the care of casualties. This is not to say that other functions cease. But the primary function is the care of casualties. FM 16-5, The Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant in Combat Operations, asserts:

(During the battle phase) Priority for religious support is to casualties. Large group services normally are not possible. If forward of the combat trains, the ministry team normally moves at the last practical moment to the position it expects to occupy during intense combat. This position is usually where the largest number of casualties is to be collected, normally at the battalion aid station. However the task force ministry team may, depending on METT-T, focus on the casualty collection points of the most heavily engaged companies. At times the ministry team moves about to minister rather than wait at a single collection point. [10]

This emphasis on the care of casualties during combat is echoed by Field Circular 16-51, Battle Fatigue Ministry. It states, 'During this phase the priority for UMT religious support is to casualties, including both physical and battle fatigue casualties.' [11] This mention of the UMT's role in the care of combat stress victims reflects emerging doctrine for chaplains and chaplain assistants. It is anticipated that the intensity and brutality of future wars will create substantial combat stress for soldiers. The UMT has a depth of skills and resources to assist in alleviating this stress. FC 16-51 notes: One of the direct religious support functions is providing preventive, immediate, and replenishing emotional and spiritual support to

soldiers who are experiencing the trauma and stress of combat."
[12]

Mobility on the battlefield is a key concern for the UMT. If they are to accomplish the wide range of responsibilities given them by the commander, dedicated transportation is essential. FM 16-5 together with AR 31-34, para. 4-59 establish the basis for the assignment of a vehicle to the UMT: "The chaplain is normally assigned a tactical vehicle with the same navigational and survival capability as vehicles provided to other members of the commander's assigned staff." [13]

The Chaplain and The Technical Chain

The presence of a technical channel or technical chain is not unique to the chaplaincy. Along with command channels and staff channels, technical channels are one of the modes used throughout the Army to convey technical instructions and professional information. As this process applies to chaplains, FM 16-5 observes:

Technical channels are used for communications among chaplains at all levels, including chaplains of other services. These channels are used to coordinate ministries, meet unit denominational needs, and share professional data within their assigned areas of responsibility. [14]

Added importance is given to the technical channel for chaplains. It is through this channel that the senior staff chaplain of a command exercises his "operational supervision and control" of the chaplains assigned to that command or installation. One example of the extent of this supervision is seen in the requirement that a supervisory chaplain be included in the rating scheme of every subordinate chaplain. Of course, these

functions are exercised in support of the commander's responsibility for the overall religious program. [15]

One of the responsibilities of the chaplaincy which often causes misunderstanding with commanders is area coverage. Area coverage is defined as:

Each chaplain extends religious and moral coverage beyond his or her assigned unit to minister to all personnel within the command's geographical area or as specified in area coverage plans. [16]

Since senior chaplains administer the area coverage program through the technical channel, this sometimes places them in conflict with commanders over the utilization of chaplains. This can result in the unit chaplain being placed in an untenable position of conflicting demands upon his or her ministry.

The Commander's Responsibility for the Religious Program

The regulations are clear about who has the responsibility for the religious program. It rests with the commander. AR 165-20 states: "Commanders are responsible for the religious, spiritual, moral, and ethical well-being of all personnel in their commands." [17] The chaplain has the primary staff responsibility to assist the commander in this endeavor. But the responsibility lies with the commander.

Conclusion

This brief digest of doctrine serves to add perspective as we turn now to ask commanders how they view these same matters. Chapter II will analyze the responses of some former battalion commanders to a questionnaire on the role of the chaplain. The

method will be to analyze these responses of the commanders without much editorial comment. The comparison of the views of commanders with the statements of doctrine will be done in Chapter III.

CHAPTER I

ENDNOTES

1. Army Regulation 165-20, Duties of Chaplains and Commanders' Responsibilities, para.1-5; a,b.
2. AR 165-20, 2-2; a,b.
3. Field Manual 16-5, The Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant in Combat Operations, p.3.
4. FM 16-5, p.21
5. FM 16-5, p.21
6. AR 165-20, 2-1; a.
7. FM 16-5, p. 3.
8. Field Circular 16-5-4, The Unit Ministry Team--General Support (Installation), p.18.
9. FM 16-5, p.5.
10. FM 16-5, p.53.
11. Field Circular 16-51, Battle Fatigue Ministry, p. 14.
12. FC 16-51, p.v.
13. FM 16-5, p. 40.
14. FM 16-5, p. 19.
15. AR 165-20, 2-3.
16. AR 165-20, 1-9;c.
17. AR 165-20, 3-1.

CHAPTER II

QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

Questionnaire Description

The questionnaire was comprised of forty-seven questions, the first four of which were designed to gain administrative information about the respondents. The primary response mode was geared to value labels, each with a numerical value as follows:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

This response mode was used throughout the questionnaire except for questions 16 through 26 and questions 29 through 34. In these cases, the respondent was requested to prioritize the options given to them. A comment sheet was also included in the questionnaire packet in order to give the respondents an opportunity to express their views on the chaplaincy or to clarify their responses to the questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen at Annex A.

The target audience was the 165 former battalion commanders who were students in the U.S. Army War College, class of 1987, along with the 46 former battalion commanders who were members of the War College staff and faculty. Of this total population of 211, 126 returned completed questionnaires (59%). Of this number, about half (65) also returned the comment sheet with written responses. In the analysis which follows, the most significant responses within each category will be highlighted. In

order to gain some significance for the most highly rated responses, a determination was made to use the following formulas:

1. Positive responses-- those items having a minimum of 60% "strongly agree" and a total of at least 90% when combined with "agree." These items will be marked with (!) and followed by the combined total of "Strongly agree" and "agree." ($SA\% + A\% = \text{total}\%$)

2. Negative responses--those items having at least a 36% response level when "disagree" and "strongly disagree" are combined. This floor was chosen because at a level of 36% or greater, the "undecided" vote tends to also be large enough to detract from a positive interpretation. These items will be marked with (N) and followed by the combined total of "disagree" and "strongly disagree." ($SD\% + D\% = \text{total } \%$)

3. Items which do not meet the criteria to be highlighted as either a positive or a negative response will be indented with a > placed next to the question number to further identify it.

After the statistical arranging of the questions according to the criteria listed above, comments taken from the written response sheets will be presented which address the same areas as the questions. This approach will be used in each of the categories of the questionnaire.

Before moving to that procedure, however, some generic statements taken from the written comments should be noted. Since no limiting instructions were given to the participants regarding their use of the comment sheet, many of them went beyond the categories of the questionnaire and made a variety of other remarks. Those which are too broad to fit within the categories

below will be presented here. If any implications can be drawn from sheer volume, the area coverage system is the issue of greatest concern! More respondents wrote more words on this subject than any other. Two said that they were well-served by the system. The remainder felt that as a system it fails to provide adequate chaplain coverage. And the commanders of assigned chaplains felt that the area coverage responsibilities given to their chaplain seriously eroded his or her effectiveness in the unit. More about this under the "Technical Chain" section below.

Second in terms of volume were comments about the chaplain technical chain. The bulk of the comments focused on the disparity between the priorities of the commander for his chaplain and those of the technical chain. This will also be expanded in the appropriate category below.

Third most common were general endorsements of the value of a chaplain to the life of a unit. Since this is a generic response which pervades all of the categories, it will be expanded in depth here. Typical of these endorsements is the former commander who said, "I was fortunate to have a battalion chaplain in my unit in Germany. His presence significantly contributed to my unit's readiness, the morale of the soldier and the care available to his [the soldier's] family." Another said, "The battalion chaplain is a key member of the battalion staff and a personal confidant of the commander." One commander allowed that although he had an authorization for a chaplain, one was never assigned. He formally requested the assignment of a chaplain as a part of his unit's status reporting every month. When this did not produce results, he made an offer to give up one of his other

officers to get a chaplain! Unfortunately, this didn't work either. But it says a great deal about the value he placed on having an assigned chaplain. He concluded by saying, "I think chaplains are key assets for any unit--peace or war." Another went even further by saying, "I can't say enough about the value of a good chaplain to the commander and the command. . . More important in people problems than the CSM. . . I'd give up the CSM for another chaplain." Finally, "This survey gets to a vital problem--every unit needs a chaplain. Chaplains are needed to minister to not only the troops but to commanders and leaders as well. They need to be proactive and realize that they are an essential part of the command team."

Lest these glowing endorsements lead us to believe that all is well regarding chaplains, three respondents reported having disappointing experiences. The common thread which ties these complaints together is a chaplain who does not engage fully in the life of the unit. One former commander said, "I'd rather have had no chaplain than the one I had who was half-hearted and not around when we needed him."

The remainder of the written comments will be thematically selected and grouped under the categories of the questionnaire. Not all written statements will appear. Those which seem to best represent the theme of a group of comments will be presented. This is raw data and no attempt has been made to support or deny the aggregate responses of the questionnaire.

The Chaplain As Staff Officer

In this section, commanders were asked to express their views

on the chaplain as an officer. They chose items as follows:

- (I) 07. Have exemplary military bearing and appearance. (93.7%)
- (I) 08. Exhibit good physical conditioning. (95.2%)
- (I) 09. Have good staff work abilities and fully participate in the battalion staff functioning. (90.5%)
- >10. Be the "eyes and ears" of the commander in the unit.
- (I) 11. Advise the commander on spiritual and religious matters. (96.8%)
- (I) 12. Advise on morale and motivational matters. (95.2%)
- (I) 13. Advise on emotional problems of the unit and families. (96.8%)
- (N) 14. Advise on organizational effectiveness matters. (36.5%)
- >15. Advise on ethical matters.

Written Responses to this Category

In general, the participants felt strongly that the chaplain should possess good staff knowledge and abilities. They clearly endorsed his role as being important to the life and success of the unit and its mission. In addition, serious concern was raised about the chaplain's ability to be effective with the religious programs of the unit unless he or she understood and employed good staff work. One former commander stated, "My chaplain had great ideas for religious programs but had no concept of how to get those programs implemented. My XO and I spent an inordinate amount of time teaching him staff procedures."

Other typical comments regarding the chaplain as staff officer are as follows:

"The chaplain, like the CSM and other staff officers, is a valuable extension of the commander. In particular he assists the commander in monitoring the climate and status of the unit, both spiritual and otherwise."

"The chaplain is a very important partner in a total command program. He should be involved in all staff actions as if he were a primary staff member and allowed/required to provide input."

"The chaplain helps the chain of command with understanding the troops, their problems and the mood of the unit. He must be very personable if he is going to interact with the troops and the chain of command. It is important that the chaplain be able to work with the NCO's!"

The only written comment on the physical conditioning of chaplains states:

The one I mentioned as best [out of three assigned] was not initially in hard physical condition, and would literally walk himself to exhaustion. The others drove around-- where possible-- handed out candy bars, platitudes, and provided services as required. Only the guy walking had a feeling as to what was going on in the unit, and he was the only one who had my confidence, which in some cases is as important as having the confidence of the troops.

The choice on the questionnaire, "He/she should be the 'eyes and ears' of the commander in the unit" drew the most written comments within this first major category. Most felt that the chaplain was a key person to advise the commander on the "mood" of the unit. But almost all expressed some concern that this be done in such a way as to keep the chaplain from appearing to be a spy for the commander. Typical is this one: The chaplain should

provide feedback to the commander and in that sense is another set of "eyes & ears"--but this has to be a delicate balance because the chaplain must have the trust & confidence of the soldiers to minister effectively--he cannot be perceived as a "spy" for the commander.

An allied concern was for the possible confidential nature of anything which the chaplain might pass on to the commander. One person wrote:

One issue that should be addressed is confidentiality, i.e. what does the chaplain tell his commander and what must be kept as privileged information. This is a very fine line and oftentimes separates a commander and his chaplain when he feels obligated to withhold information.

Only one respondent concluded that the chaplain should not be the "eyes and ears" of the commander.

He states: Strongly feel that chaplain should not be "eyes and ears" of the commander. This could jeopardize his ability to communicate. He can report deficiencies like any other staff officer.

The Chaplain as Clergy person

In this section, participants were asked to prioritize different aspects of a chaplain's ministry. They were directed to select five, give them a rating of "1" and give all others a rating of "2" through "5" to indicate a lesser priority. Their selections are presented here in descending percentages. The first five are their selections for the most important elements of a chaplain's ministry.

- (1) 18. Counsel soldier's families. (97.6%)(SA + A)
- (2) 16. Provide religious services. (96.8%)

- (3) 20. Provide a "ministry of presence" (visiting soldiers in motorpools, training sites, duty areas, etc.) (96.0%)
 - (4) 21. Visit hospital and confinement facility. (95.9%)
 - (5) 17. Counsel soldiers (95.2%)
-

- (6) 23. Accompany the unit to the field. (92.8%)
- (7) 22. Offer a full range of chapel programs. (80.2%)
- (8) 26. Serve on various councils (OE, etc.). (59%)
- (9) 25. Support chaplain coverage responsibilities for other units and activities. (56.2%)
- (10) 24. Be an OE (organizational effectiveness) resource for the commander. (31.1%) (Note: This option drew the fifth highest negative response of the questionnaire (68.9% St.Disagree + Disagree)

Written Comments in this Category

Comments in this section were not as numerous as in other cases. However, there seemed to be an assumption that this was the primary reason for the chaplain's presence in the military setting. Indeed, several of the writers challenged the chaplaincy to re-focus on this mission. An example of this trend of thought is, "Religion is what the chaplain provides that we can get no other place. Counselors, OE, etc. can all be accomplished by hiring civilian experts. I am convinced the chaplain corps has gotten its priorities reversed." Another echoed this latter concern by saying, "Just as the Infantry has begun to spend far too much time on housekeeping/management, the Chaplain Corps also has a mission identity problem."

The only specific choice from the questionnaire which got individual comment in this section was the one concerning "ministry of presence." A representative observation was: "Chapel and religious services are not the least important, but they are also not the most important. Ministry of presence is unquestionably the number one need and most important factor." Another challenged, "The 'ministry of presence' ought to be the guiding concept for the chaplaincy." Several gave illustrations of a chaplain who was successful because of his or her ministry of presence. An example is, "My chaplain was the most effective I have ever seen. . . His method was simple. He donned a rucksack and would spend every minute of field time with [troops]. He wandered easily through the barracks while in garrison and was 200% accessible to troopers and their families."

The Chaplain in Field Training

In this section, the participants were asked to determine the primary role of the chaplain in field training. They were given two options and asked to mark their preference with a "1" and the other one with a "2".

- (1) 27. The primary role of the chaplain during field training is to provide "real time" ministry to soldiers (worship services, unit visits, counseling, etc.). (84.9% gave this option a "1"; 15.1% gave it a "2")
- (2) 28. The primary role of the chaplain during field training is to train for combat ministry. (14.3% gave this option a "1", while 83.3% gave it a "2".)

Written Comments in this Category

Surprisingly, not many written comments addressed field training and the role of the chaplain in field training. This is especially puzzling since there tended to be strong statements about not being able to get the chaplain out to field training sites as often as commanders would have liked. It seems that they might have taken this opportunity to express their views on why they wanted the chaplain in the field.

One former battalion commander said, "Chaplain in field training is to (a) learn how to soldier in combat environment (what he and other soldiers are expected to do, (b) minister to soldiers, (c) be part of the battalion team and not a "special" person with "special" privileges." Another supported the training-first agenda by saying, "In my mind, every activity of the combat leader or the chaplain, for that matter, should be to prepare for performance in combat."

The last comment to be included here reflects the motif of several others:

I like to think that both [training and ministry] can be done simultaneously. In my experience, my chaplains had little effective knowledge or training in field operation but were "burning to learn." What they had learned at basic course and what the technical chain tried to give them was WW II vintage.

The Chaplain in Combat

In this section, participants were asked to determine the best location for a chaplain during combat, define the focus of ministry during combat, and select critical items of equipment needed by the chaplain during combat.

Regarding location, no clear preference was shown. However, the strongest negative reply of the entire questionnaire was recorded against question 31, ("In the rear area.") Commanders clearly do not feel that the chaplain should be in the rear area during combat.

"The best location for a chaplain during combat is:"

- (1) 29. With the troops in the front lines. (58.7% "1" + 24.6% "2" = 83.3%)
- (2) 32. At the casualty collection and treatment locations (36% "1" + 47.2% "2" = 83.2%)
- (3) 30. With the command group. (4.8% "1" + 17.5% "2" = 22.2%)
- (N) 31. In the rear area. (SD-1.6% + D-58.7% = 60.3%) If the undecideds are added in, this totals 90.5% against the chaplain being in the rear area.

"During combat a chaplain should:"

- (!) 33. Be with casualties. (SA-54% + A-43.7% = 97.6%) (Note: this item and item 34 do not meet the strict criteria of at least 60% Strongly Agree. However when combined with the "Agree" responses, both of the items fall within the top ten aggregate (Strongly Agree+Agree) responses of the questionnaire. They are therefore given the (!) designation.
- (!) 34. Provide worship services as possible. (SA-53.2% + A-43.7% = 96.8%)
- >35. Be with soldiers in combat to encourage them. (SA-42.9% + A-31.7% = 74.6%)
- (!) 36. Be a role model for faith and religious strength. (SA-65.1% + A-31.7% = 96.8%)

- >37. Prevent battle fatigue through counseling and education. (SA-20.6% + A-39.7% = 60.3%)

The following are important for a chaplain to have in combat:

- >38. A vehicle. (SA-44% + A-43.2 = 87.2%)
- >39. Communication capability (MSE, Sincgars, etc.)
(SA-23% + A-42.9% = 65.9%)

(N) 40. Automation equipment. (SD-4.8% + D-35.7% = 40.5%)

Written Comments in this Category

Those who addressed the chaplain's ministry in combat were unanimous in giving the chaplain a broad mission. The following quotes capture the essence of all that were made on this subject:

The chaplain should perform in combat just as in peace. His priorities need to be focused on the troops and wherever he can do that best is where he should be located. He should not be right on the FLOT but should not be in the battalion rear, as well. He needs to allocate time for the whole battalion area. Tough mission.

Location on the battlefield-- important to split time between casualty locations, staging/assembly areas and front lines. Chaplains have to make the "rounds" to all soldiers-- good, bad, ugly, healthy, sick, wounded, etc.

All who commented on the issue of providing a chaplain with equipment in combat supported the provision of a vehicle. One supported a radio. The following is typical:

Something has to be done about getting chaplains TOE vehicles and commo. It's long overdue, and we've been putting "band-aids" on this problem long enough.

Finally, this comment: "In combat, the chaplain is not a cheer leader; he's a presence, not a role model. He's just as scared as everyone else."

The Chaplain and the Technical Chain

Participants were asked to characterize their experience as commander with the chaplain technical channel. Responses were so mixed that a clear picture does not emerge. Unfortunately, neither does a clear affirmation of the functioning of the technical chain. Because the data is so mixed, the actual figures will be reproduced in this section.

"In your experience, you found the presence of this technical chain to be:"

>41. Mutually supportive, creating the best utilization of the chaplain.

Value Label	Freq.	Percent	Cum. Percent
Strongly Agree	24	19.2	19.2
Agree	41	32.8	52.0
Undecided	18	14.4	66.4
Disagree	31	24.8	91.2
Strongly Disagree	5	8.7	100.0

>42. Basically conflictive, resulting in strained relationships and counterproductive demands on the chaplain.

Value Label	Freq.	Percent	Cum. Percent
Strongly Agree	13	10.4	10.4
Agree	31	24.8	35.2
Undecided	22	17.6	52.8
Disagree	45	36.0	88.8
Strongly Disagree	14	11.2	100.0

>43. Benign (You were aware of the technical chain, but it did not seem to impact on your chaplain for good or bad.)

Value Label	Freq.	Percent	Cum. Percent
Strongly Agree	8	6.4	6.4
Agree	18	14.4	20.8
Undecided	29	23.2	44.0
Disagree	56	44.8	88.8
Strongly Disagree	14	11.2	100.0

Written Comments in this Category

As mentioned above, responses relating to the chaplain technical chain comprised the second greatest volume. Two of these were generally affirming of the technical chains function, although one of the two qualified his affirmation. He states:

Generally I found the technical chain supportive, but there were times when "community" duties are perceived to be more important than "unit" duties. If the chaplain is assigned to the battalion his first loyalties belong there!

Representative quotes from those who had problems with the technical chain follow:

Unfortunately, the technical chain with which I and my chaplains had to deal was terrible. Confusing lines of authority, indecision, denominational politics and flat-out lying drove two of my chaplains out of the Army even though they both thoroughly enjoyed the unit aspects of military chaplaincy.

I had a chaplain assigned when I assumed command. Later in my command tenure, my chaplain's responsibilities were revised by the DISCOM chaplain in order to provide better support to the chapel versus the troop units. Obviously, a move I resented since I was given no voice in the decision.

My point in telling this story is that the Post Chaplains wield too much power. My experience, and it is limited, suggests that we (the Army) have a problem. My new chaplain always felt he was serving many masters. . . .

Therefore "my" chaplain existed on paper only-- he was rated by me but really controlled by the brigade chaplain because of his requirement to cover multiple units. This generated conflict between my desires and those of the community ministry.

However, not all of the problems were generated by the technical chain. One participant stated that his battalion chaplain induced the problems which existed. He discloses, "He used the technical chain as an excuse for not showing up for staff

meetings and social gatherings."

No solutions were offered by anyone. The implied message is that it is a chaplaincy problem and needs to be fixed.

Commander's Responsibilities

The design of this section was to measure commanders' awareness of their responsibilities for the religious program of their unit and what steps they took to insure its success.

While you were in command of your battalion, did you:

- >44. Know that the religious program was YOUR program?
(SA-51.2% + A-35% = 86.2%)
- >45. Establish guidelines and priorities for the program? (SA-31.5% + A-46% = 77.4%)
- >46. Inform the chaplain of your expectations for his/her ministry? (SA-50.8% + A-40.3% = 91.1%)
- >47. See it as a part of your responsibility to provide "area coverage" to other units and activities in the area who were without an assigned chaplain?
(SA-30.1% + A-39.8% = 69.9%)

Written Comments in this Category

Although the role of the commander is explicit and implicit in the range of comments above, few chose to address it as a separate topic. It is clear most felt that the religious program and the function of the chaplain was important to their unit and that they needed to set priorities and provide guidance. One former commander said, "I was heavily involved with my assigned chaplain in defining his counselling, 'ministry of presence',

command climate roles, and practices." Even though others didn't spell it out that clearly, that sense pervades many of the responses in other areas. Many did express a lack of understanding about how to best use and supervise a chaplain, especially early in their tour as commander. One person allowed:

During my command tenure I was required to supervise a chaplain for the first time. I think it would have been helpful to me to have had a block of instruction during the Pre-command Course concerning proper chaplain supervision and 'how to' develop a religious program.

Another participant included the battalion executive officer in this need as well:

The role of the battalion/brigade XO who usually is the rater needs to be examined. Bn XO's normally have no training to prepare them to handle chaplains, yet the XO is staff coordinator and a key player in the life of a Bn/Bde chaplain.

Some placed partial responsibility for the education of the commander on the shoulders of the chaplain. A representative comment is:

My point above is-- commanders will have more than enough to keep them busy early on. Chaplains must do all they can to get to the new commander and advise of all the many things chaplains can provide.

The commander's responsibility to provide area chaplain coverage to units without an assigned chaplain was raised in this section of the questionnaire. Responses to concerns over area coverage generated the largest volume of comments. These responses fell into two categories: (1) those made by commanders who provided area coverage and, (2) those made by the recipients of area coverage. The statements made by commanders in the first category tended to acknowledge their responsibility to provide

area coverage. But in every case, they saw this as a secondary priority. The following comment was typical:

I understand area coverage and installation denominational responsibilities and have no problem with them until they keep my chaplain out of the battalion more than in it. . . If the chaplain is assigned to the battalion, that must be his first priority.

The people in the second category, however, were much more vocal in their concerns about area coverage. Selected quotes follow:

In USAREUR, where I supposedly received area chaplain coverage, I rarely had contact with the chaplains supposedly providing such coverage. There seemed to be no one chaplain that I could really count on as mine so no rapport could be developed. No area coverage chaplain ever wandered through the billets chatting with troops, nor did they ever accompany us to the field. When we did call for help during two situations (a suicide, a family problem) they were slow to respond. (Others reported similar experiences.) We had one chaplain assigned to cover two Bradley battalions. At best, a difficult situation for all concerned. The person who pays the greatest price for this type of arrangement is the soldier. It unquestionably had a negative impact.

Field coverage was provided by the brigade chaplain who was located 2 hours from my home station. He only saw my troops during his short trip to GRAF. He subordinated field trips to Kaserne ministry.

Area coverage does not work. When are we going to wake up and assign a chaplain to every battalion? That's the only way the soldiers will get the kind of coverage they deserve!

It seems from these quotes that area coverage is a system which frequently does not work well. It is a problem both for those who provide it and those who receive it. It is also implied that relationships with the technical chain in working out area coverage plans are often troublesome.

Conclusion

This concludes the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire. In the final chapter, the findings of this chapter will be compared and contrasted with stated chaplain doctrine.

CHAPTER III

A COMPARISON OF CHAPLAIN DOCTRINE WITH COMMANDERS' VIEWS

General

Having read the preferences of the commanders in Chapter II, one is not impressed that there is a wide divergence between them and chaplain doctrine. Indeed, the prime implication which grows out of the commanders' comments is that chaplain doctrine is largely on target. The few exceptions to this endorsement will be noted in the sections below. However, it is the application of the doctrine with which commanders sometimes find fault. Their tensions with the applications will also be highlighted below.

This general acceptance given to chaplain doctrine by the commanders is confirming to the sound direction being taken by those who are responsible for designing and promulgating it. The challenge to keep doctrine relevant for the future will no doubt be a substantial one indeed.

In the categories which follow, only those items which represent a variance between commanders' views and doctrine or have operational implications will be commented upon. In all other cases it can be assumed that the commanders agreed with chaplain doctrine.

The Chaplain as Officer

The commanders fully agreed with the directions of chaplain doctrine in this category. However, they also gave strong

endorsement to a chaplain having exemplary military bearing and appearance, and exhibiting good physical conditioning. While these are implicit in chaplain doctrine, perhaps they should be made more explicit. These elements seem to be part of the "rites of passage" in the commander's mind for full identification with and participation in the unit.

Chaplain doctrine is very clear regarding the chaplain's functions as a staff officer. The commanders underscore the value of these functions. Their only complaint is that the chaplains often arrive with limited ability to perform these functions. But this is a training issue more than a doctrinal one.

The survey respondents were fairly clear that they did not expect the chaplain to fill the gap left by the demise of the formal Organizational Effectiveness program. And doctrine does not give the chaplain this responsibility. Even so, some chaplain support activities (which are included in doctrine) may border on OE contributions. This seems to be fine with the commanders.

The Chaplain As Clergyperson

Chaplain doctrine lists the types of ministry which are appropriate for a chaplain to conduct. It requires only two of them: (1) hold religious services and, (2) conduct or arrange burial services at the request of survivors. (AR 165-20,1-7;1-10). The remainder are to be focused and included based on the commander's and chaplain's assessment of need. In the survey, the commanders clearly indicated which ministries they feel are most important. Their top five, in this order, were: (1)counsel

soldier's families, (2)provide religious services, (3)provide a ministry of presence, (4)visit hospital and confinement facility and, (5)counsel soldiers. In light of the many comments made by commanders about the chaplain in the field, "Accompany the unit to the field" was sixth.

This is a very instructive prioritization. It should help the chaplain to approach his or her commander with informed understanding.

In keeping with the commanders' comments in the previous section regarding OE, the item "Be an OE resource for the commander" drew the fourth highest negative response of the survey! They really do not think that this is part of the chaplain's role.

The Chaplain in Field Training

The former commanders were asked to indicate what they see as the primary role of the chaplain in field training. They were given two choices ("real-time" ministry, or training for combat) and asked to give one a "1" and the other a "2." By an overwhelming margin (107 out of 126) they selected "real-time" ministry. Only 18 chose training as the first priority. This is one of the few places that the views of the commanders are out of synch with chaplain doctrine. FC 16-5-4 states, "Chaplains attend field training exercises first to train to Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) standards, then to minister." [1]

In actuality, both can occur simultaneously. But given the intense demands and expectations which will fall upon the Unit Ministry Team during combat, incisive and rigorous training is essential. This may be an instance where doctrine is out ahead

of current perceptions. If so, commanders may need some education on this matter.

The Chaplain in Combat

This is another case where there is some variance between the views of commanders and current doctrine. When considering the location of the chaplain during combat, doctrine clearly places him at the casualty collection and treatment sites. [2]

Commanders, on the other hand, preferred "With the troops in the front lines." Their second choice was "At the casualty collection and treatment locations."

Some balancing of this position is seen in the following section where participants were asked to place their values on the elements of a chaplain's ministry in combat. They selected "Be a role model for faith and religious strength", "Be with casualties", and "Provide worship services as possible" in that order as their top three preferences. Interestingly, they did not select, "Be with soldiers in combat to encourage them" as a very high priority. This would seem to detract from their emphasis on being with the troops in the front lines which they indicated in the section above.

Emerging doctrine gives the Unit Ministry Team an increasing role in preventing and assisting soldiers to overcome battle fatigue. The commanders did not value that highly in this survey. This may be another area of need for the education of commanders.

Regarding the equipment needed by a chaplain in combat, the commanders strongly supported a vehicle (87.2%-SA+A). They

moderately supported communication equipment (65.9%), but did not see the need for automation equipment (24.6%).

The Chaplain and the Technical Chain

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the responses in this category were so varied and seemingly contradictory that no clear lessons can be drawn. Even so, there do not seem to be any contradictions between what the doctrine says and what commanders want. The tension appears to be not in the doctrine but in the application and operation of the doctrine. The most common thread of discontent seems to be the perception that the chaplain technical chains presumes prerogatives which the commander feels strongly are his.

Commander's Responsibilities

Although none of the responses in this category were strong enough to meet the criteria to be highlighted, the commanders did give a fairly clear indication that they were aware of their responsibilities in this area. The troublesome question centered on their responsibility to provide area chaplain coverage to units without an assigned chaplain. This item got the lowest positive response of the section (69%). This may be reflective of the great volume of written comments which indicated problems both with giving area coverage and with receiving it.

Nothing in this section indicated any necessary changes in chaplain doctrine. Added emphasis on the role of the chaplain to commanders in the pre-command course certainly seems appropriate.

Conclusion

This chapter brings the study to a close. After a digest of chaplain doctrine was compared with the preferences of commanders, it was determined that no major divergence exists between the two. The values and emphases articulated by the commanders helps to understand the most beneficial application of the doctrine. And beyond this, the commanders helped to identify several key needs for training and operational improvement. Among these are increased training in the chaplain's responsibilities as a staff officer, and improved operations in the technical chain and area coverage arenas.

With all of this information in hand, Chaplain Goode, with whom we started this study, should have a much better idea what his commander is expecting out of him. One would hope that within a few days he would be going back to lay out a very sound and comprehensive religious program for his commander's consideration.

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

1. Field Circular 16-5-4, The Unit Ministry Team--General Support (Installation), p.18.
2. Field Manual 16-5, The Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant in Combat Operations, p.53.

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- Winter, 1978. Entire issue (10 articles) examines trends in military ministry.
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Please answer each question on the Scantron sheet which is attached. Use a #2 pencil only and avoid making stray marks. Do not fold or staple the Scantron sheet. A comment sheet is also provided for any additional information you may want to have considered in this study.

Administrative Information

1. Questions 1-3, your USAWC Box number (to be used only if I need to get back to you to clarify a response) Please use a zero for the first number if your box number is less than 100.

2. Question 4 Did you have a chaplain assigned to your Battalion? (1 = yes, 2 = no)

3. Question 5 Where was your Battlion located?
(1 = CONUS, 2 = USAREUR, 3 = Korea, 4 = Other)

4. Question 6 - The type of your Battalion was:
(1 = Combat, 2 = Combat Support, 3 = Combat Service Support, 4 = Training, 5 = other)

Most of the questions in this survey can be answered in the following way: (But watch for special instructions for some questions)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Please answer all of the questions based on your views as a Commander regarding Chaplains. If you commanded a battalion, but did not have a chaplain assigned, please respond with what your views would have been had you had a chaplain.

THE CHAPLAIN AS AN OFFICER

The Chaplain is both a clergyperson and an officer. In this role as an officer, the chaplain should:

07. Have exemplary military bearing and appearance.

08. Exhibit good physical conditioning.

09. Have good staff work abilities and fully participate in the Battalion staff functioning.

10. Be the "eyes and ears" of the Commander in the unit.

The chaplain should be an advisor to the Commander in the

following areas:

11. Spiritual and religious matters.
12. Morale and motivational matters.
13. Emotional problems of the unit and families.
14. OE matters (Organizational Effectiveness).
15. Ethical issues.

THE CHAPLAIN AS CLERGYPERSON

Now we turn to the clergy dimension of the chaplain's role. You are asked to give an indication of how important you feel different aspects of a chaplain's ministry are.

Special Instructions:

Out of the statements in this section (questions 16 through 26) please choose five and give them a ranking of "1" (strongly agree). These will make a statement about what you think is most important for a chaplain to be focusing on. Give all other questions in this section a "2" through "5" to indicate a lesser priority. The scoring scheme is repeated here to aid you in placing those which are not a #1.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

16. Provide religious services.
17. Counsel soldiers.
18. Counsel soldier's families.
19. Preach interesting and challenging sermons.
20. Provide a "ministry of presence" (visiting soldiers in motorpools, training sites, duty areas, barracks, etc.).
21. Visit hospital and confinement facility.
22. Offer a full range of chapel programs.
23. Accompany the unit to the field.
24. Be an OE (organizational Effectiveness) resource for the Commander.
25. Support chaplain coverage responsibilities for other units and activities.
26. Serve on various councils (Equal Opportunity, Family Advocacy, etc.)

THE CHAPLAIN IN FIELD TRAINING

(Please note - questions 27 & 28 ask you to identify the primary role of the Chaplain in the field. Mark the one you feel to be most primary with a "1" and the other with a "2".

27. The primary role of the chaplain during field training is to provide "real time" ministry to soldiers (worship services, unit visits, counseling, etc.)

28. The primary role of the chaplain during field training is to train for combat ministry

THE CHAPLAIN IN COMBAT

Please Note - The next four questions deal with the location of the chaplain in combat. Please prioritize, giving (in your opinion), the most appropriate location a "1" and the others a "2", "3", or "4" in descending order of value.

The best location for a chaplain during combat is:

29. With the troops in the front lines

30. With the Command group

31. In the rear area

32. At the casualty collection and treatment locations

Now, please return to the original scoring scale:

Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

During combat a chaplain should:

33. Be with casualties.

34. Provide worship services as possible.

35. Be with soldiers in combat to encourage them.

36. Be a role model for faith and religious strength.

37. Prevent battle fatigue through counseling and education.

The following are important for a chaplain to have in combat:

38. A vehicle.

39. Communication capability (MSE, Sincgars, etc.).

40. Automation support.

THE CHAPLAIN AND THE TECHNICAL CHAIN

The chaplain has both a command and a technical chain of supervision. Ideally these two chains of supervision insure that the best utilization of the chaplain occurs. In your experience, you found the presence of this technical chain to be:

41. Mutually supportive, creating the best utilization of the chaplain.

42. Basically conflictive, resulting in strained relationships and counterproductive demands on the chaplain.

43. Benign (You were aware of the technical chain, but it did not seem to impact on your chaplain for good or bad).

COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

AR 165-20 establishes that the religious program is the Commander's program. While you were in command of your Battalion, did you:

44. Know that the religious program was YOUR program?

45. Establish guidelines and priorities for the program?

46. Inform the chaplain of your expectations for his/her ministry?

47. See it as part of your responsibility to provide "area chaplain coverage" to other units and activities in the area who were without an assigned chaplain.

This is the end of the questionnaire. A comment sheet is attached. If the questionnaire has not given you a full opportunity to express your views on the chaplaincy, please do so on this sheet. Your comments will be helpful to round out and clarify the data gathered from the questionnaire.

Please return the Scantron and comment sheets to: CH Don Breland, Box 65, NLT 11 March.

Thank you for your time.